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RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA PRIORITY 0045

C O N F I D E N T I A L UNVIE VIENNA 000370

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/04/2034
TAGS: [ENRG](#) [IAEA](#) [ETTC](#) [KNNP](#) [MNUC](#) [PARM](#) [TRGY](#) [CU](#) [BEXP](#)
SUBJECT: IAEA FLIRTS WITH TECHNICAL COOPERATION ENGAGEMENT
WITH CUBA

Classified By: Charge D'Affaires Geoffrey Pyatt for reasons 1.4 b
and d

Summary

¶1. (C) As a result of a prior conversation with American and Cuban colleagues, Warren Stern, the head of the IAEA Incident and Emergency Center, believes the opportunity exists for U.S./Cuba collaboration on research in cytogenetic biodosimetry, a technique used to determine radiation exposure. In a July 21 meeting with msnoff, Stern suggested this joint work could take the form of exercises, a comparison test, or a cooperative information sharing network. Unless Department sees advantage in this initiative, mission will continue to discourage IAEA programs with a U.S./Cuba focus. (Note: Radolfo Suarez, a Cuban IAEA staffer, was invited to July 21 by Stern to the meeting with msnoff, but did not attend. End Note.)

A Proposed Framework

¶2. (C) During a recent IAEA Response Assistance Network (RANET) meeting, IAEA Incident and Emergency Center (IEC) chief Warren Stern (amcit) mentioned that Cuban and U.S. representatives were discussing their individual emergency response programs with him. The IAEA believes that U.S. and Cuba could both benefit from collaboration on cytogenetic biodosimetry (CBD), a method of determining exposure to radiation. Noting the what he perceived as a recent thaw in U.S./Cuba relations, Stern suggested that CBD could provide an opportunity to cooperate on an anti-terrorism project without causing proliferation risks.

¶3. (C) The primary U.S. practitioner of CBD is the Department of Energy's Radiation Emergency Assistance Center/Training Site (REAC/TS), a part of the Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education. In Cuba, the Radiation Protection Center, or Centro de Proteccion e Higiene de las Radiaciones (CPHR), works with CBD. Stern believes that Cuba's CBD capabilities are good and suggested that the U.S. would also benefit from cooperation. Cuba plans to register its emergency response capabilities with RANET in the near future. RANET will allow IAEA to marshal emergency response equipment rapidly in the event of a radiological emergency. Cuba is also participating in a regional biodosimetry shipping exercise which will likely occur by the end of the year.

¶4. (C) Stern argued there are at least five avenues for a collaborative relationship between REAC/TS and CPHR:
--- Technical assistance for dose determination in case of person and/or large groups of population exposed.
--- Technical assistance on Quality Management program for cytogenetic dosimetry.
--- Organization of joint intercomparison exercise.

--- Creation of Pan American network on Biological Dosimetry. This network would include U.S., Canada, and the Latin-American Network on Biological Dosimetry (LBDNET).
--- Organization of joint emergency response exercises involving LBDNET, U.S. and Canada. Stern offered to host these activities under IAEA auspices, citing the agency's goal of creating regional networks such as these. The projects could be managed by the Technical Cooperation department.

Room for mutual learning

¶5. (SBU) REAC/TS, the primary U.S. CBD laboratory, re-opened within the past year. The only other CBD facility in the U.S. is the Armed Forces Radiobiology Research Institute (AFRRI), a Department of Defense Laboratory. AFRRI strictly focuses on military applications of CBD. Stern said the IEC sends CBD work to France and Argentina.

Comment

¶6. (C) While the IAEA may see opportunities for collaboration between the U.S. and Cuba in this area, we expect the nature of Cuban-American relations do not allow for such as step at this time. Mission recommends continued engagement in multilateral fora such as future RANET meetings. Mission also believes that until Congress reverses a long standing statutory requirement to withhold U.S. funding for Technical Cooperation projects involving Cuba, any overt U.S. cooperation with Cuba with the Agency as the

middleman is not prudent. We will seek opportunities to underline this cautionary note to Stern and his team.
PYATT